

# Interstellar Precursor Probe

Ralph L. McNutt, Jr.

The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory  
Laurel, MD, U.S.A.

Ares V Solar System Science Workshop

NASA Ames Conference Center, Building 3  
NASA Research Park, Moffett Field, CA  
16 August 2008





**Si requiritis  
futurum nostrum,  
spectate astra!**

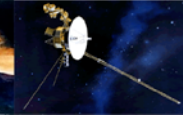


# An Interstellar Probe Has Been Advocated for Over 30 Years

NASA Studies	National Academy Studies
Outlook for Space, 1976	Physics through the 1990's - Panel on Gravitation, Cosmology, and Cosmic Rays (D. T. Wilkinson, chair), 1986 NRC report
An implementation plan for solar system space physics, S. M. Krimigis, chair, 1985	Solar and Space Physics Task Group Report (F. Scarf, chair), 1988 NRC study Space Science in the 21st Century - Imperatives for the Decade 1995-2015
Space Physics Strategy-Implementation Study: The NASA Space Physics Program for 1995-2010	Astronomy and Astrophysics Task Group Report (B. Burke, chair), 1988 NRC study Space Science in the 21st Century - Imperatives for the Decade 1995-2015
Sun-Earth Connection Technology Roadmap, 1997	The Decade of Discovery in Astronomy and Astrophysics (John N. Bahcall, chair)
Space Science Strategic Plan, The Space Science Enterprise, 2000	The Committee on Cosmic Ray Physics of the NRC Board on Physics and Astronomy (T. K. Gaisser, chair), 1995 report Opportunities in Cosmic Ray Physics
Sun-Earth Connection Roadmaps, 1997, 2000, 2003	A Science Strategy for Space Physics, Space Studies Board, NRC, National Academy Press, 1995 (M. Negebauer, chair)
NASA 2003 Strategic Plan	The Sun to the Earth - and Beyond: A Decadal Research Strategy in Solar and Space Physics, 2003
The New Science of the Sun - Solar System: Recommended Roadmap for Science and Technology 2005 - 2035, 2006	Exploration of the Outer Heliosphere and the Local Interstellar Medium, 2004
	Priorities in Space Science Enabled by Nuclear Power and Propulsion, 2006

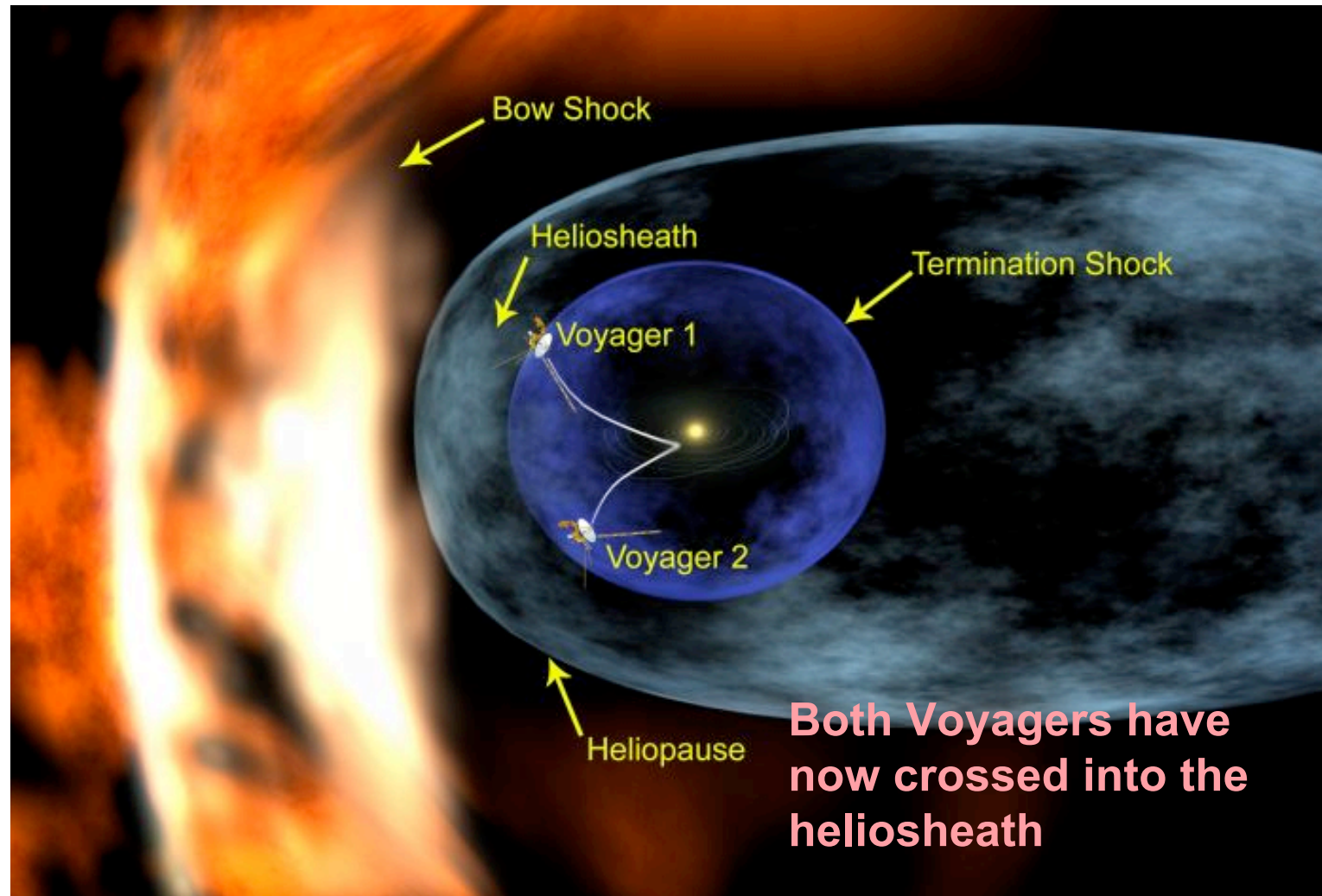


Si requiritis  
futurum nostrum,  
spectate astra!



**APL**  
Space Department

## Artist's Concept of Heliosphere and Trajectories of the Voyagers



16 August 2008

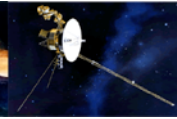
Ares V Solar System Workshop  
PUBLIC DOMAIN INFORMATION. NO LICENSE REQUIRED IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITAR 120.11(8).

RLM - 3





**Si requiritis  
futurum nostrum,  
spectate astra!**



**APL**  
Space Department



# The Science Questions

**What is the nature of the nearby interstellar medium?**

**How do the Sun and galaxy affect the dynamics of the heliosphere?**

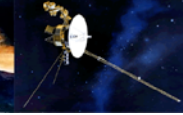
**What is the structure of the heliosphere?**

**How did matter in the solar system and interstellar medium originate and evolve?**





Si requiritis  
futurum nostrum,  
spectate astra!



**APL**  
Space Department

# Science Traceability and Strawman Instruments Have Been Mapped Out

- **Low-mass payloads focus on “fields and particles”**
  - *In situ* measurements
  - Remote measurements (UV and neutral atoms) that use the unique vantage offered
- **Cases for infrared absorption measurements are more problematic**
  - Mass of optics and cooling apparatus
  - Large data rates
- **Mass and power are significantly constrained**
  - Goal has been to remain at less than ~45 kg and 40 W, **including** ~30% margin for 10 instruments
  - Similar constraints on Pioneer 10: 11 instruments, 33 kg, 24 W

# Science Traceability Matrix

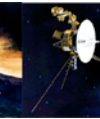
Science Questions	Interstellar Probe Science Objectives	Objective Questions	Science Measurement Objectives	Required Instruments	Analysis Product	Science Result
3rd Interstellar Probe Science and Technology Definition Team Mtg, 17-19 May 1999, JPL	From NASA's Interstellar Probe Science and Technology Definition Team Report		THIS WORK	THIS WORK	THIS WORK	
<b>What is the nature of the nearby interstellar medium?</b>	Explore the interstellar medium and determine directly the properties of the interstellar gas, the interstellar magnetic field, low-energy cosmic rays, and interstellar dust	How does the composition of interstellar matter differ from that of the solar system?	Elemental and isotopic abundances of significant species	PLS, EPS, CRS	Interstellar medium composition	Composition differential between the solar system and current local interstellar medium
		What constraints do the interstellar abundances of $^2\text{H}$ and $^3\text{He}$ place on Big Bang and chemical evolution theories?	$^2\text{H}$ , $^3\text{He}$ , and $^4\text{He}$ abundances in the interstellar medium	CRS - LoZCR		
		Is there evidence for recent nucleosynthesis in the interstellar medium?	Isotopic abundances of "light" elements	CRS		
		What is the density, temperature, and ionization state of the interstellar gas, and the strength and direction of the interstellar magnetic field?	Bulk plasma properties, composition, and ionization state and vector magnetic field in the interstellar medium	MAG, PLS	Thermodynamic and physical state of the very local interstellar medium (VLISM)	Physical state of the VLISM
		What processes control the ionization state, heating, and dynamics of the interstellar medium?	Charge state, electron properties, Ly- $\alpha$ flux, neutral component properties	PLS, LAD, NAI, ENA	Energy inputs in the VLISM	
		How much interstellar matter is in the form of dust and where did it originate?	Dust flux, composition, pickup ion composition (from sputtering)	CDS, (PWS), PLS	Neutral matter assay for the VLISM	
		How much greater are cosmic ray nuclei and electron intensities outside the heliosphere, and what is their relation to galactic gamma ray and radio emission?	Cosmic ray ion and electron energy spectra; low frequency radio emissions	CRS, PWS	Low-energy galactic cosmic rays	
<b>How do the Sun and galaxy affect the dynamics of the heliosphere?</b>	Explore the influence of the interstellar medium on the Solar System, its dynamics, and its evolution	What spectrum of 10-100 micron galactic infrared and Cosmic Infrared Background Radiation is hidden by emission from the zodiacal dust?	Infrared spectral measurements from 10 to 100 microns	Not measured	IR absorption by solar system dust	
		What is the size and structure of the heliosphere?	Detect heliospheric boundaries from their plasma, field, and radio signatures	MAG, PWS, PLS, EPS, LAD, ENA	Heliospheric spatial scales	Structure and dynamics of the heliosphere in the upwind direction
		How do the termination shock and heliopause respond to solar variations and interstellar pressure?	<i>In situ</i> plasma and field measurements on the time scale of a fraction of a solar rotation (~days)	MAG, PLS	Heliospheric temporal variability	
		How does the interstellar medium affect the inner heliosphere and solar wind dynamics?	Pickup ions and anomalous cosmic rays, high energy electrons within the heliosphere	PLS, EPS, CRS	Spatial and temporal variability of the interstellar medium properties	Effects of the VLISM on the heliosphere
		What roles do thermal plasma, pickup ions, waves, and anomalous cosmic rays play in determining the structure of the termination shock?	Thermal plasma, pickup ions, wave, and anomalous cosmic rays properties on the scale of the scale of $c/w_{pi}$	PLS, EPS, PWS, CRS - AGCR	Inputs from heliospheric interaction into the solar wind	
<b>What is the structure of the heliosphere?</b>	Explore the impact of the solar system on the interstellar medium as an example of the interaction of a stellar system with its environment	What are the properties of interstellar gas and dust that penetrate into the heliosphere?	Thermodynamic properties and composition of neutral gas; dust flux and composition	NAI, ENA, CDS	Properties of interstellar gas and dust in the outer heliosphere	
		Does the heliosphere create a bow shock in the interstellar medium?	Plasma and magnetic field measurements at ion-inertial scale length from the heliosheath into the interstellar medium (telemeter changes)	MAG, PWS, PLS	Determination of whether the solar system produces an external shock	Impact of the solar system on the local composition and thermodynamic properties of the VLISM
		What is the relation of the hydrogen wall outside the heliopause to similar structures and winds observed in neighboring systems?	Neutral atom and plasma ion distribution functions from the heliopause through the heliosheath	NAI, ENA, PLS	Structure and properties of the predicted hydrogen wall	
		How do the Sun and heliosphere influence the temperature, ionization state, and energetic particle environment of the local interstellar medium? How far does the influence extend?	Particle properties from thermal plasma to galactic cosmic rays from inside the heliosphere at regular intervals though the heliospheric structure and into the interstellar medium	NAI, ENA, PLS, EPS, CRS	Penetration of heliosheath properties into the VLISM	
<b>How did matter in the solar system and interstellar medium originate and evolve?</b>	Explore the outer Solar System in search of clues to its origin, and to the nature of other planetary systems	How does particle acceleration occur at the termination shock and at other astrophysical shocks?	Ion and electron measurements from thermal plasma to low-energy cosmic rays on scales small compared with the shock passage time by the spacecraft	PLS, EPS, CRS - Autonomous burst mode for instruments as appropriate	Characterization of particle acceleration at the termination shock	
		Is there structure in the Zodiacal cloud due to dynamical processes associated with solar activity, planets, asteroids, comets, and Kuiper Belt objects?	Plasma and dust measurements on time scales of the solar rotation period	PLS, CDS, (PWS)	Structure and dynamics of the Zodiacal dust cloud in the outer heliosphere	Properties and dynamics of bulk matter in the outer solar system and VLISM
		What does the distribution of small Kuiper Belt objects and dust tell us about the formation of the solar system?	Dust and pickup ion spatial distribution and composition and composition variation with distance from the Sun	CDS, PLS, EPS, (PWS)		
		How does the structure of the Zodiacal dust cloud impact infrared observations of the galaxy and searches for planets around other stars?	Infrared flux from near IR to at least ten's of microns	Not measured	Quantified extinction from Zodiacal dust	
		What are the origin, nature, and distribution of organic matter in the outer solar system and the interstellar medium?	Dust composition, pickup ions from C, N, O	CDS, PLS, EPS, (PWS)	Identification of <i>in situ</i> organic materials or fragments in the heliospheric boundary regions and/or VLISM	

Interstellar Probe Instrument Resources and Requirements								Mission and Spacecraft Requirements	Data Product
THIS WORK	IIE Team Consensus Payload							THIS WORK	THIS WORK
Material Measured	Acronym	Instrument	Mass (kg)	Power (W)	Acquisition data rate (bps)	Capabilities	Implementation		
Fields	MAG	Magnetometer	8.81	5.30	130.00	2- three-axis fluxgate magnetometers; do one sample per day from each magnetometer (onboard processing from multiple samples per spacecraft roll period which is 2880 s)	65 bits/sample x number of samples per day x number of sensors; inboard and outboard fluxgate magnetometers mounted on 5.1 m, self-deployed	Magnetically clean spacecraft	B-field vectors
	PWS	Plasma wave sensor	10.00	1.60	65.00	Three 20-m self-supported antennas; measure E-field vectros up to 5 kHz; no search coils (no B-field components)	From Voyager: 115,000 kbps -> 12.5 kilosamples per second with a 14 bit A/D. Collect 2048 samples and do onboard FFT- frequency of processing limited by	Antenna at least ~20m length	E-field power spectra
Plasma and suprathermal particles	PLS	Plasma	2.00	2.30	10.00	Plasma ions and electrons from the solar wind, interstellar wind, and interaction region; thermal, suprathermal, and pickup component properties and composition	Mount perpendicular to spin axis; need clear FOV for a wedge 360° around by ~±30°	Clear FOV in direction to Sun, clear FOV in direction anti-Sun; equipotential spacecraft	Ion and electron distribution function; composition
Solar energetic particles through galactic cosmic rays	EPS	Energetic particle spectrometer	1.50	2.50	10.00	TOF plus energy measurements give composition and energy spectra; ~20 keV/nuc to ~5 MeV total energy for ions in 6 pixels; electrons ~25 keV to ~800 keV	Mount perpendicular to spacecraft spin axis; clear FOV of 160° x 12° wedge; on-board processing with magnetometer output to get pitch-angle distributions for downlink	Clear FOV	Ion and electron pitch angledistributions functions; composition
	CRS - ACR/GCR	Cosmic-ray spectrometer: anomalous and galactic cosmic rays	3.50	2.50	5.00	Energy Range on ACR end (stopping particles) H, He: 1 to 15 MeV/nuc Oxygen: ~2 to 130 MeV/nuc Fe: ~2 to 260 MeV/nuc Energy Range on GCR end Electrons: ~0.5 to ~15 MeV P, He: 10 to 100 MeV/nuc stopping 100 - 500 MeV/nuc penetrating Oxygen	Measure ACRs and GCRs with 1 > Z > 30: double-ended telescope with one end optimized for ACRs and the other for GCRs. It would also measure penetrating particles as is done on Voyager so that both ends need to have clear FOVs.  GCR end FOV = 35° ACR en	Clear FOV	Differential flux spectra by composition
	CRS - LoZCR	Cosmic-ray spectrometer: electrons/positrons, protons, helium	2.30	2.00	3.00	Energy Range: positrons: 0.1 to 3 MeV electrons: 0.1 to 30 MeV gamma-rays: 0.1 to 5 MeV H: 4 to 130 MeV/nuc He: 4 to 260 MeV/nuc	FOV = 46° full cone Geometry Factor = 2.5 cm <sup>2</sup> sr  Measurement technique DE X E (e-, H, He) annihilation (e+)  Dröge, W., B. Neber, M. S. Potgieter, G. P. Zank, and R. A. Mewaldt, A cosmic ray detector for an interstellr probe, pp. 471-474 in "The Outer H	Clear FOV	Differential flux spectra
Neutral material	CDS	Cosmic dust sensor	1.75	5.00	0.05	Same capabilities as the student dust counter (SDC) on New Horizons	Mount within 5° of ram direction; sesnor area/FOV of 30 cm x 50 cm must not be obscured	Clear FOV in ram direction	Dust particle mass and limited composition
	NAI	Neutral atom detector	2.50	4.00	1.00	Measure neutral H and O at >10 eV/nucleon incoming from interstellar medium [10 eV/nuc ~44 km/s; incoming neutrals are at ~25 km/s with respect to the	Single pixel; mount looking into ram direction; conversion-plate technology	Clear FOV in anti-Sun (ram) direction	Neutral distribution functions
	ENA	Energetic neutral atom imager	2.50	4.00	1.00	Views 0.2 to 10 keV neutral atoms, 1 pixel;	~6° x 6° FOV, mount with sensor looking perpendicular to spacecraft spin axis	1-axis scanner perpendicular to spin axis	Energetic neutral atom energy flux
Photons	LAD	Lyman-alpha detector	0.30	0.20	1.00	Single-channel/single-pixel photometer (at 121.6 nm) similar to those on Pioneer 10/11 (but without the 58.4 nm channel)	Mount perpendicular to nominal spin axis; need clear field of view (~4° x 4°); average over azimuthal scan provided by spacecraft motion	1-axis scanner perpendicular to spin axis	Lyman alpha flux
			35.16	29.40	226.05				



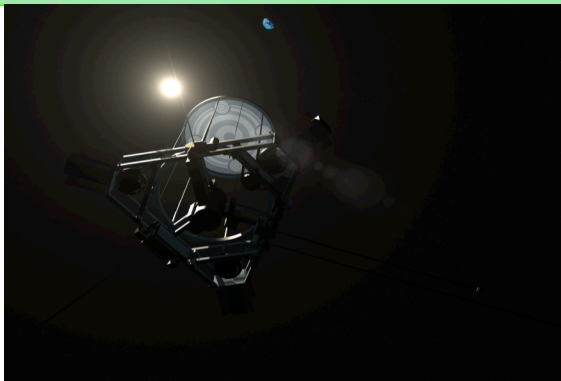


**Si requiritis  
futurum nostrum,  
spectate astra!**

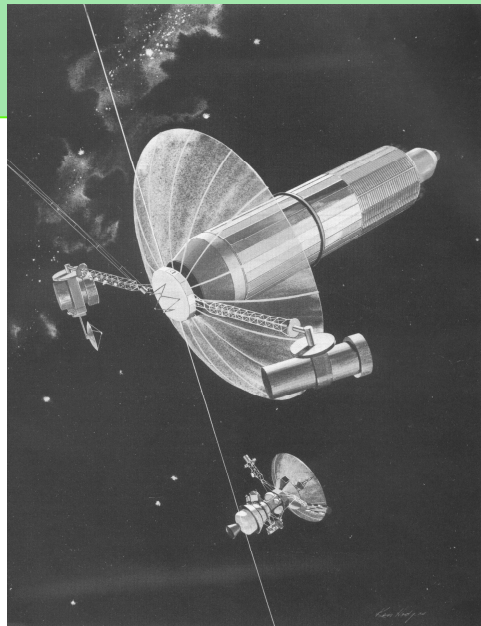


## All Approaches to an Interstellar Probe Mission Need Propulsion Development

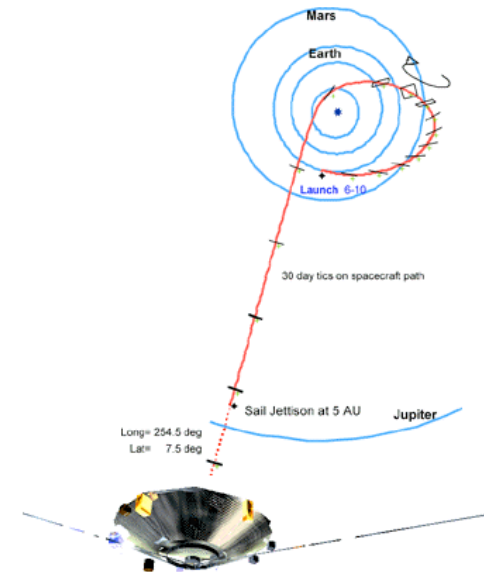
- **Ballistic (NIAC 2004)**
  - optimized launch 20 Feb 2019
  - Jupiter flyby 19 June 2020
  - Perihelion maneuver 4 Nov 2021 at 4 RS
  - 1000 AU 17 Oct 2071
  - 12.16 kg science
  - 1.1 MT
- **Nuclear Electric (JPL 1980)**
  - 2015 departure 20 years to 200 AU
  - 30 kg science package
  - Bimodal nuclear propulsion
  - 11.4 MT
- **Solar Sail (NASA 1999)**
  - 200 AU in 15 years
  - Perihelion at 0.25 AU
  - Jettison 400m dia sail at ~5 AU
  - 25 kg science
  - 246 kg



16 August 2008



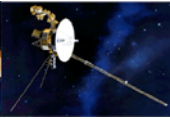
Ares V Solar System Workshop



RLM - 8



Si requiritis  
futurum nostrum,  
spectate astra!

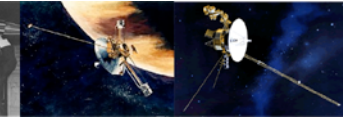


## Top-Level Mission Requirements for the Radioisotope Electric Propulsion (REP) NASA Vision Mission

- Launch spacecraft to have an asymptotic trajectory within a  $20^\circ$  cone of the “heliospheric nose” ( $+7^\circ$ ,  $252^\circ$  Earth ecliptic coordinates)
- Provide data from 10 AU to 200 AU
- Arrive at 200 AU “as fast as possible”
- Consider all possible missions that launch between 2010 and 2050
- **Use existing launch hardware** Relax for use of Ares V
- No “in-space” assembly
- Launch to escape velocity
- Keep new hardware and technology to a minimum
- Provide accepted “adequate” margins



**Si requiritis  
futurum nostrum,  
spectate astra!**



**APL**  
Space Department

## **Propulsion “Contenders” Trade Technology Readiness Against Flight Time**

- **Radioisotope Electric Propulsion (REP)**
  - Near-term technology
  - High-efficiency, low-specific mass radioisotope power supplies (RPS)
  - Work from 1 AU outward
- **Solar Sail**
  - Needs low areal mass density ( $\sim 1 \text{ g m}^{-2}$  or less)
  - Needs to deal with high temperature
  - Work from  $\sim 0.25$  AU outward
  - Current technology RPS sufficient for power





Si requiritis  
futurum nostrum,  
spectate astra!



**APL**  
Space Department

## REP Implementation



**ADVANCED PROJECTS DESIGN TEAM**  
**INTERSTELLAR EXPLORER VISION MISSION**  
**CUSTOMER: RALPH MCNUTT**  
**REPORT ID #794**  
**LEADER: CHARLES BUDNEY**  
**5, 7, 8 APRIL 2005**

The following representatives comprised the study team:

Subsystem	Name	Phone #	E-Mail
ACS	Bob Kinsey	610-336-1828	robert.j.kinsey@aero.org
CDS	Vincent Randolph	4-3148	Vincent.Randolph@jpl.nasa.gov
Deputy System Engineer	Michael Luna	3-2838	Michael.Luna@jpl.nasa.gov
Documentation	Cynthia Moclure	3-2511	Cynthia.Moclure@jpl.nasa.gov
Facilitator	Charles Budney	4-3981	Charles.Budney@jpl.nasa.gov
Ground Systems*	Robert Gustavson	3-3289	Robert.Gustavson@jpl.nasa.gov
Instruments	Mike Henry	4-9614	Michael.Henry@jpl.nasa.gov
Logistics	Adrian Downs		Adrian.Downs@jpl.nasa.gov
Mission Design	Eugene Bonfiglio	4-9283	Eugene.Bonfiglio-112461@jpl.nasa.gov
Power*	Timmerman Paul	4-5388	Paul.J.Timmerman@jpl.nasa.gov
Propulsion	Paul Woodmansee	4-6904	Paul.R.Woodmansee@jpl.nasa.gov
Science	Smythe William	4-3612	William.D.Smythe@jpl.nasa.gov
Structures	Gerhard Klose	4-8123	Gerhard.J.Klose@jpl.nasa.gov
Structures	Gerardo Flores	4-5308	Gerardo.Flores@jpl.nasa.gov
Systems*	Tracy Leavens	4-1204	Tracy.Leavens@jpl.nasa.gov
Telecom	Annydas Valisnys	4-5219	Annydas.Valisnys@jpl.nasa.gov
Telecom - Hdw*	Farinaz Tehrani	3-6230	Farinaz.Tehrani@jpl.nasa.gov
Thermal*	Miyake Robert	4-5381	Robert.N.Miyake@jpl.nasa.gov

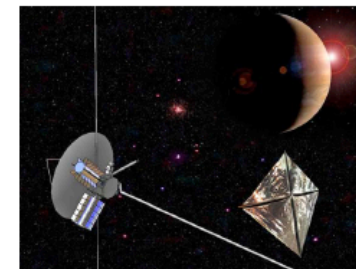
16 August 2008

## Solar Sail Implementation



**INTERSTELLAR  
HELIOPAUSE  
PROBE**

### **STUDY OVERVIEW OF THE INTERSTELLAR HELIOPAUSE PROBE**



### **AN ESA TECHNOLOGY REFERENCE STUDY**

Planetary Exploration Studies Section (SCI-AP)  
Science Payload and Advanced Concepts Office (SCI-A)



prepared by/préparé par  
reference/reference  
issue/édition  
revision/révision  
date of issue/date d'édition  
status/état  
Document type/type de document

A.E. Lyngvi, M.L. van den Berg, P. Falkner  
SCI-A/2006/114/THP  
3  
4  
17/04/2007  
Released  
Public report



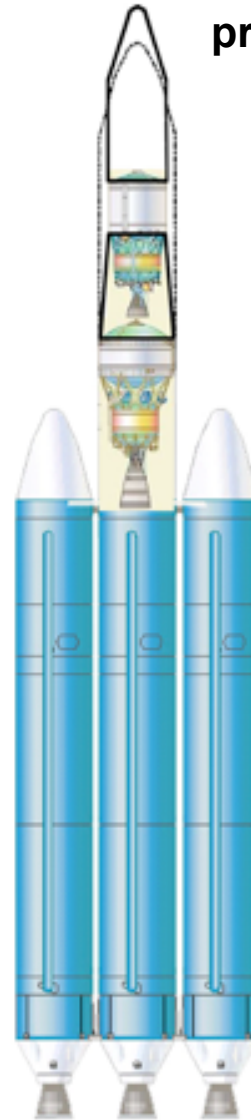
**Si requiritis  
futurum nostrum,  
spectate astra!**



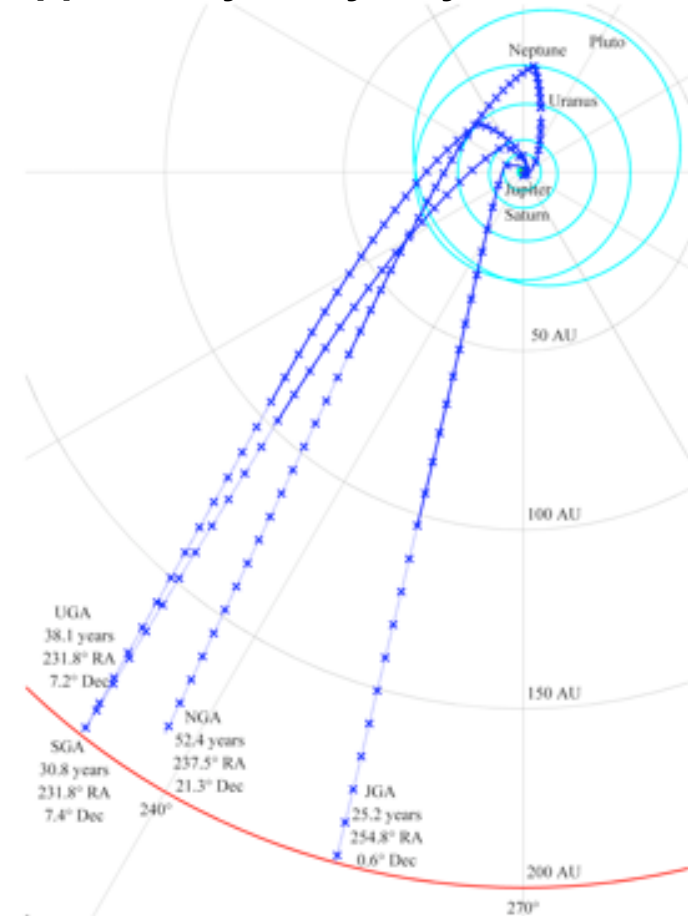
**APL**  
Space Department

# **“Vision Mission” REP Mission Design Options**

- Various upper stage options for Delta IV H were studied
- Investigated 12 existing and conceptual upper stages
- Final system was too heavy for Star 48 + Star 37 upper “stage”
- Went to a Star 48A “double stack” with custom interfaces



**Baselined single Jupiter flyby -  
prime opportunity every 12 years**



16 August 2008

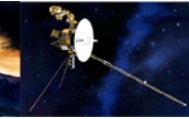
Ares V Solar System Workshop

RLM - 12

PUBLIC DOMAIN INFORMATION. NO LICENSE REQUIRED IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITAR 120.11(8).



**Si requiritis  
futurum nostrum,  
spectate astra!**



**APL**  
Space Department

# Four REP S/C Options Studied

- 1 - 5.8 kbps (200 AU) = 500 bps accumulation 24/7**
  - 586.1 kg dry/761.9 kg with contingency/1283.3 kg wet
  - Three 1000 W ion engines, 2.1-m HGA, 4 CDS strings
- 2 - same as 1 with aggressive technology**
  - 518.5 kg dry/674.0 kg with contingency/1191.4 kg wet
  - Two 1000 W ion engines, 3-m HGA, 2 CDS strings
- 3 - 500 bps (200 AU); baseline with reduced data rate**
  - 571.4 kg dry/742.8 kg with contingency/1262.8 kg wet
  - Three 1000 W ion engines, 2.1-m HGA, 4 CDS strings
- 4 - Aggressive technology; 500 bps rate; low power**
  - 465.3 kg dry/604.9 kg with contingency/1066.2 kg wet
  - Two 750 W ion engines, 2.1-m HGA, 2 CDS strings

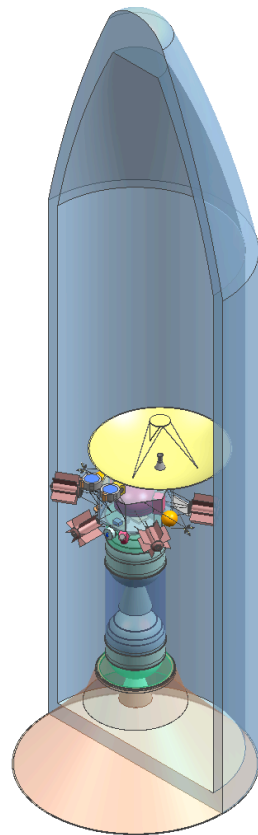




**Si requiritis  
futurum nostrum,  
spectate astra!**



**APL**  
Space Department



**I²E in Delta IV shroud  
with stacked Star 48As  
- launch configuration  
Study Baseline**

**Innovative Interstellar  
Explorer (I²E) in flight  
configuration (spin about CG  
in flight ~1 rpm)**

**Six skutterudite  
converter RTGs  
Study Baseline**

**Two lightweight 20-  
cm Kaufmann ion  
thrusters (one used  
at a time)**

**3-m dia HGA (Option 2)**

**25-m long, mutually  
orthogonal PWS  
antennas**

**~450-kg Xe tank**

**ACS thruster  
cluster (hydrazine)**

**5.1-m MAG boom with inboard and  
outboard flux-gate magnetometers**

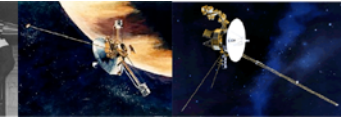
16 August 2008

APL & Solar System Workshop  
PUBLIC DOMAIN INFORMATION. NO LICENSE REQUIRED IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITAR 120.11(8).

RLM - 14



Si requiritis  
futurum nostrum,  
spectate astra!



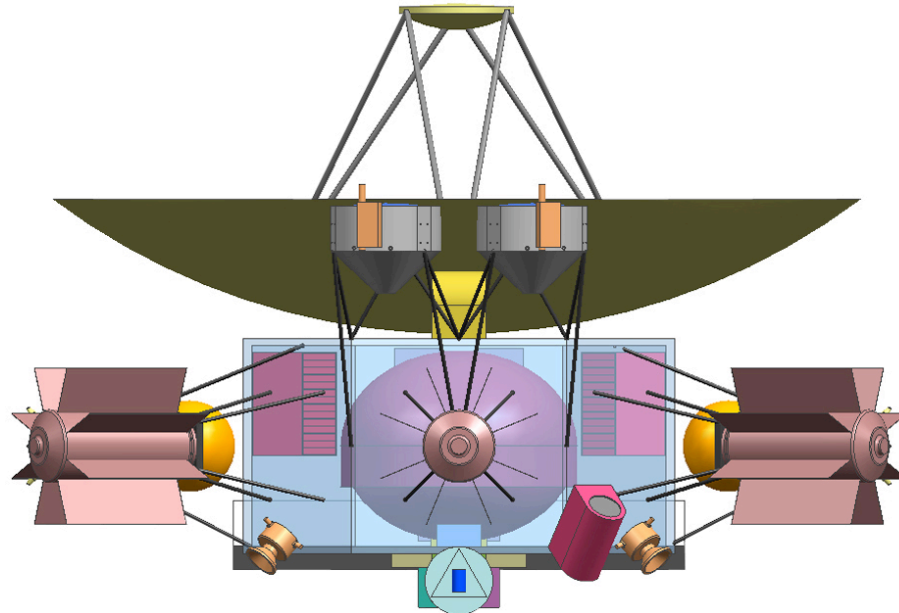
# Constellation Architecture Use

- The building blocks must exist now or following Ares flight certification



Atlas V Centaur stage  
1 or 2 engines  
(2 is better)

16 August 2008



IIE spacecraft  
(REP)

Ares V





**Si requiritis  
futurum nostrum,  
spectate astra!**

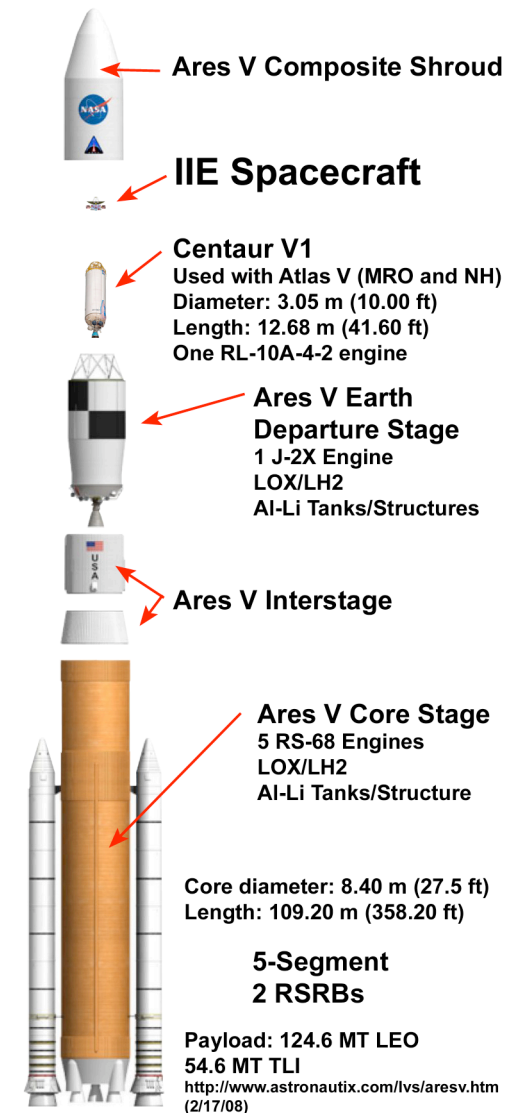


**APL**  
Space Department

# Assembling the Pieces

- Figure is to approximate scale
- Earth Departure Stage is only partially fueled to optimize launch energy
- First iteration:  $C_3 \sim 270 \text{ km}^2/\text{s}^2$ 
  - Corresponding asymptotic speed from the solar system is  $\sim 19.0 \text{ km/s} \sim 4 \text{ AU/yr}$
  - New Horizons
    - Launched to  $164 \text{ km}^2/\text{s}^2$
    - Pluto flyby at  $13.8 \text{ km/s} = 2.9 \text{ AU/yr}$
  - Voyager 1 current speed =  $3.6 \text{ AU/yr}$
  - Voyager 2 current speed =  $3.3 \text{ AU/yr}$
- To reach  $9.5 \text{ AU/yr}$  ( $45 \text{ km/s}$ ) with only a launch from Earth would require  $C_3 = 1,016 \text{ km}^2/\text{s}^2$
- Even with an Ares V, launch remains only one component

**Earth orbital speed =  $29.79 \text{ km/s}$ ;  $1 \text{ AU/yr} = 4.74 \text{ km/s}$**







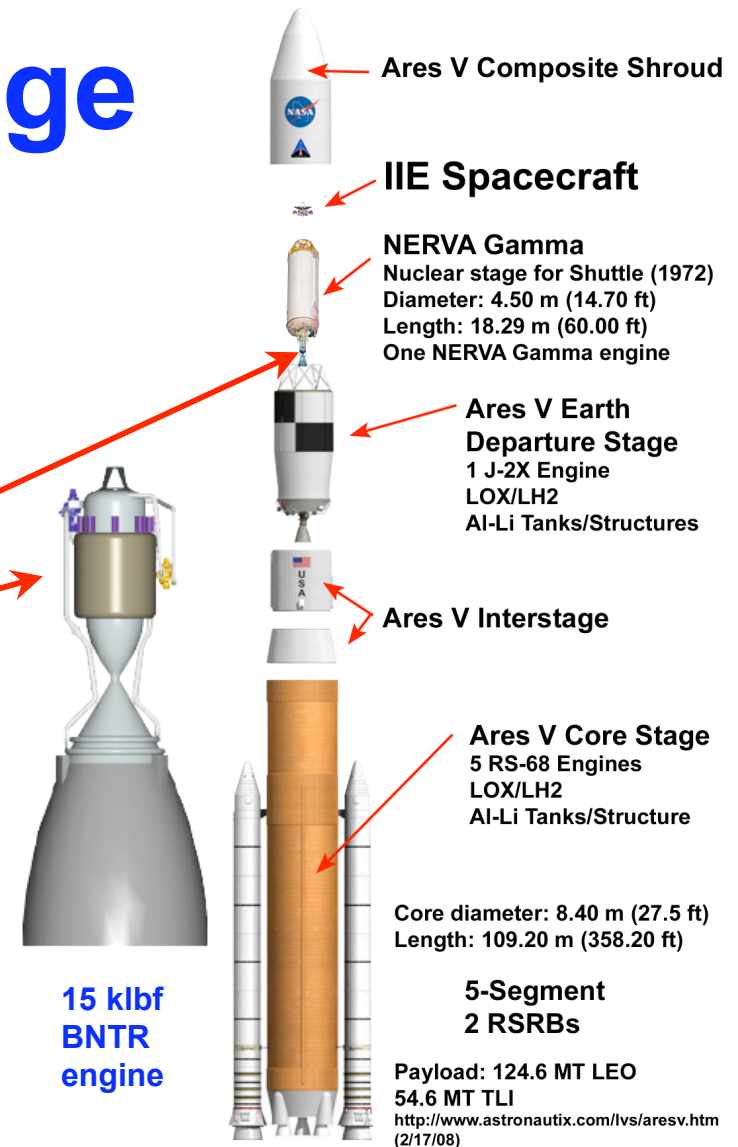
Si requiritis  
futurum nostrum,  
spectate astra!



**APL**  
Space Department

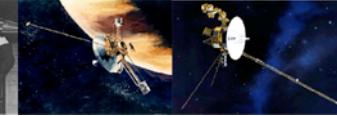
# Nuclear Upper Stage

- **Nuclear stage advantages**
  - More performance than Centaur V1
  - Lower mass
  - Earth escape trajectory
  - Fully flight qualified
- **Nuclear stage disadvantages**
  - More expensive than Centaur
  - Larger (low LH2 volume)
  - Not solar system escape trajectory
  - Requires development
    - Gamma engine thrust 81 kN (18,209 lbf)
    - BNTR engine thrust 66.7 kN (15,000 lbf)
    - 3 BNTR's baselined for Mars DRM 4.0 of 1999
- **Nuclear EDS not acceptable**
  - Not Earth-escape trajectory
  - Comparable thrust engine to NERVA 2
    - 867.4 kN (195 klbf)
    - Stage mass: 178,321 kg wet, 34,019 kg dry
    - Compare S IVB: 119,900 kg wet, 13,300 kg dry; J-2: 486.2 kN (109.3 lbf)
  - No development plans or identified requirements



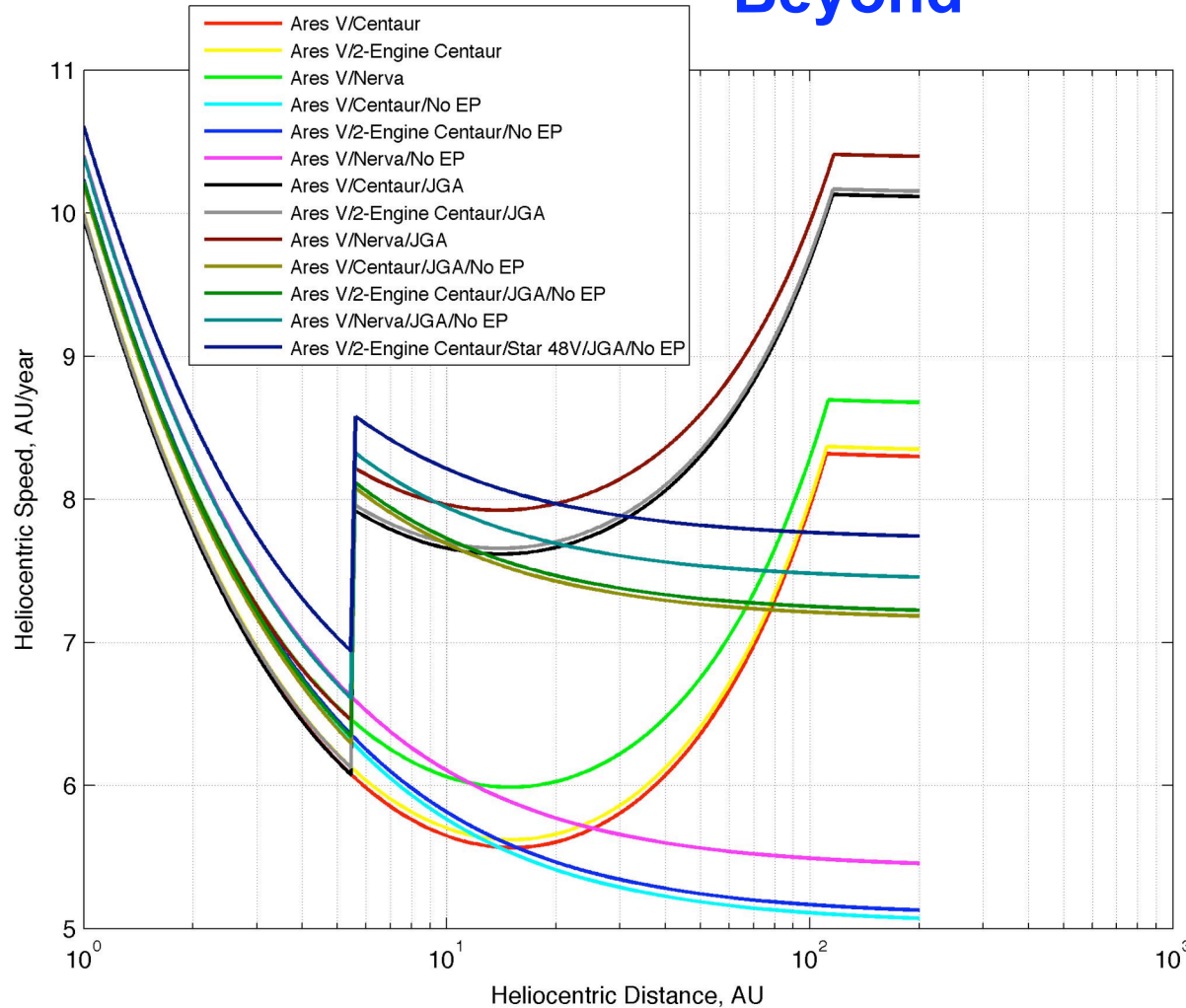


**Si requiritis  
futurum nostrum,  
spectate astra!**



**APL**  
Space Department

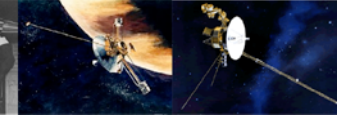
## Comparing the Options: Speed to 200 AU and Beyond



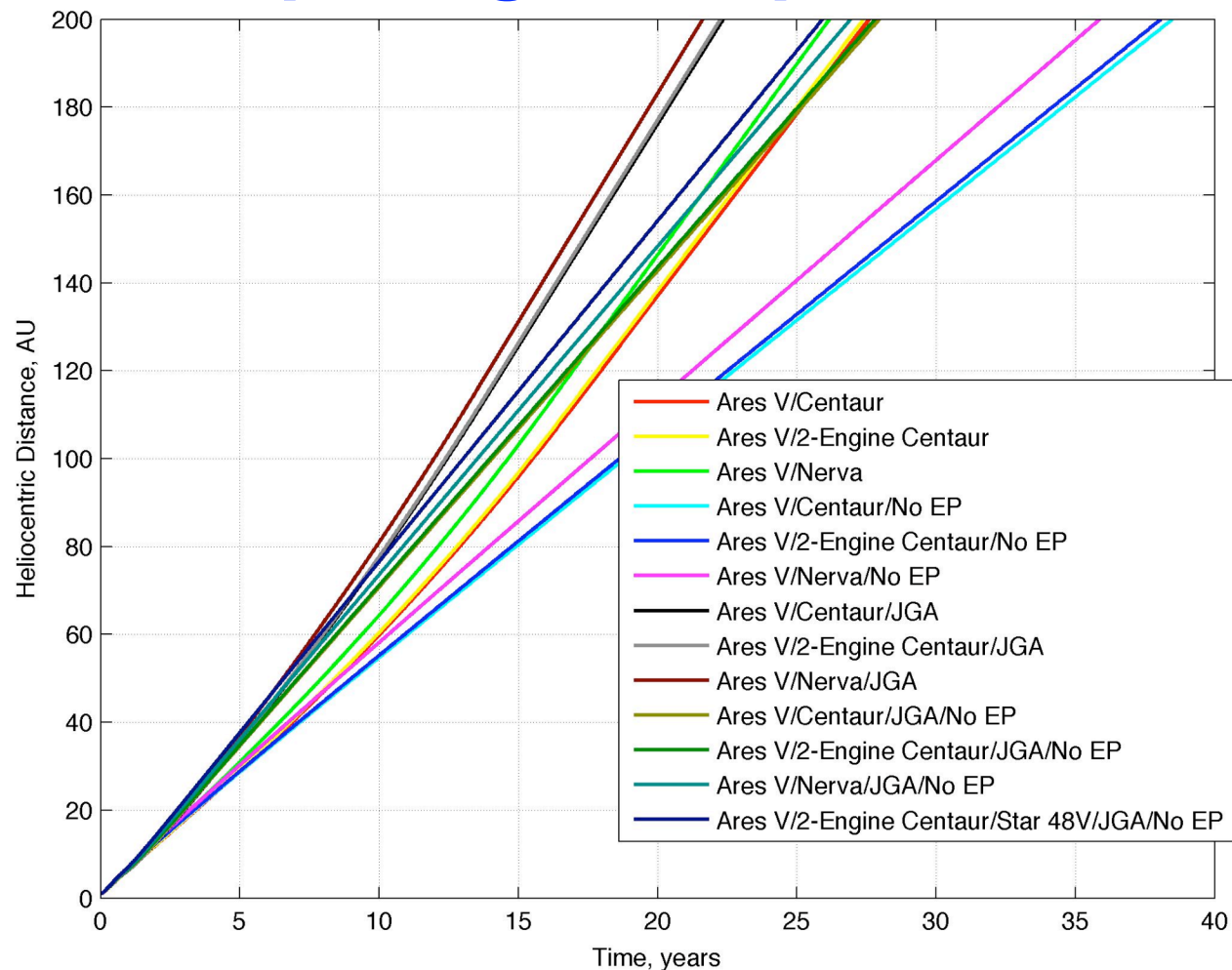
- **Probe speed versus heliocentric distance**
  - To 200 AU
  - Log distance
  - JGA is the discontinuity



Si requiritis  
futurum nostrum,  
spectate astra!



## Comparing the Options: Time to 200 AU



- Spread among options is ~22 to 38 years to 200 AU
- Widens in going to even larger distances
- Initial goal had been 15 years to 200 AU

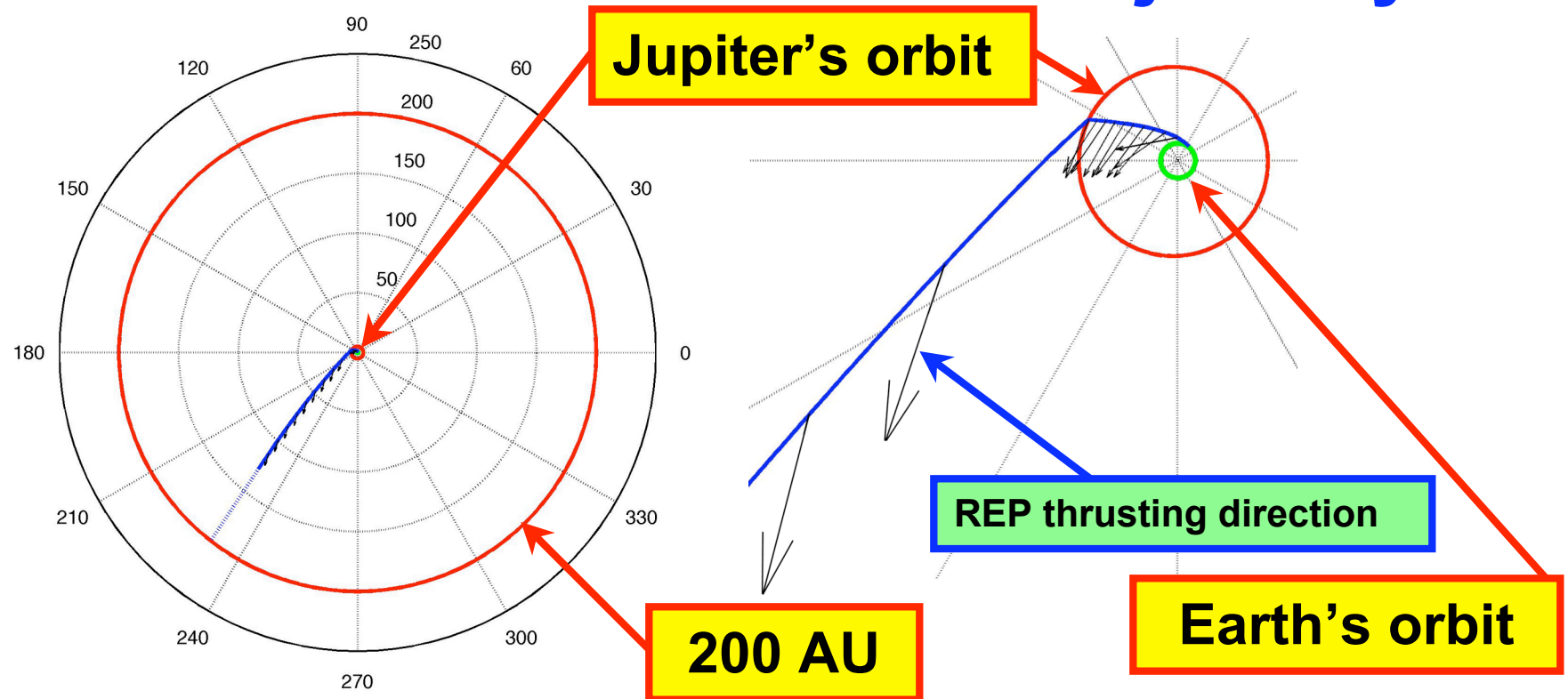


**Si requiritis  
futurum nostrum,  
spectate astra!**



**APL**  
Space Department

# Constellation-Enabled Trajectory

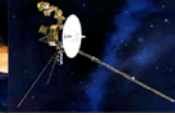


- As with previous analyses, it the the synergistic combination of 1) launch energy ( $C_3$ ), 2) gravity assist at Jupiter (JGA), and 3) ion engines powered by a high-specific-energy radioisotope power source (REP) that makes the high flyout speed possible





Si requiritis  
futurum nostrum,  
spectate astra!



# Schedule for Ares V Launch

(Option 1 - minimum new technology; Twin-engine Centaur)

- ✓ 2004-2005 Update of NASA strategic plan with ISP Vision Mission included
- ✗ 2006-2007 Focused technology development for small probe technologies
- ✗ 2007-2010 Focused technology development for an Interstellar Probe
- 2010 Start RPS fuel procurement and NEPA approvals
- 2010-2015 Design and launch I<sup>2</sup>E probe (launch 1 year later)
- 2016 Begin routine data acquisition following Jupiter gravity assist
- 2020 Voyagers cease transmission at L + 43 years: V1 at ~150 AU, V2 at ~125 AU
- 2038 Data return from 200 AU [Mission Success]; Launch + 22.3 yrs (-7.9 yr)
- 2048 Data returned from 300 AU (at 10.2 AU/yr); L+32.1 yrs (-9 yr)
- 2116 Probe at 1000 AU - "Undisturbed" VLISM reached by now;  
1.1 half-lives since original Pu-238 procurement; L + 100 yrs - but  
still have plenty of power to run spacecraft!
- Ares V speeds up arrival to 1000 AU by 31 years



Si requiritis  
futurum nostrum,  
spectate astra!



**APL**  
Space Department

# Enablers for ANY Architecture

- **“Affordable” launch vehicle including high-energy stage**
- Delta IV H: ~\$250M (<http://www.astronautix.com/lvs/delheavy.htm>) + Star 48A stage - guess ~\$30M
- Ares V: unknown + Centaur stage: unknown
- **kWe power supply with low specific mass**
  - Six at (guess) \$80M each ~\$500M for REP; one or two for solar sail
- **Reliable and sensitive deep, space communications at Ka-band**
  - Aperture fee tool from <http://deepspace.jpl.nasa.gov/advmiss/#discover>
  - Real year 3 tracks / wk; 34-m HEF through 2032; switch to 70-m through 2044
  - \$64M/yr on 70-m (used to estimate); total \$930M
- **Mission operations and data analysis (MO&DA)**
  - \$10 M per year for 30 years at 3% per annum inflation ~\$500M



**Si requiritis  
futurum nostrum,  
spectate astra!**



**APL**  
Space Department

Innovative Interstellar Probe

08/14/2008 06:48 PM



### Innovative Interstellar Explorer

A Mission to Interstellar Space

- HOME
- OVERVIEW
- SCIENCE
- MISSION
- SPACECRAFT
- EDUCATION
- GALLERY
- LINKS

HOME

BOUND FOR THE STARS

STUDY SUMMARY

#### Innovative Interstellar Explorer

Flight to the stars is the stuff of dreams – and of new scientific discoveries

The Innovative Interstellar Explorer is a NASA "Vision Mission" study funded by NASA following a proposal under NRA-03-OSS-01 on 11 September 2003. This study has focused on the elusive quest to reach and measure the interstellar medium, the "undiscovered country" outside of the influence of the nearest star, our Sun.

Distances in space are big, and so propulsion is always the driving technical element for missions to new places to do new things. Our innovation has been to seek a technical solution using radioisotope propulsion (REP): the use of electricity from known deep space power source technologies to run an ion engine to achieve a "reasonable" speed. Miniaturization and lightweight, high-efficiency power conversion are key to such an approach.



For credits see gallery

The vision of taking the first steps toward the stars has been one of the drivers and setters of paradigms throughout technical history. From the Montgolfiers' flight over Paris to that of the Wrights over Kitty Hawk, Goddard's first rocket to Explorer 1, and finally Pioneer 10 to the Voyagers, we keep reaching out. As history has shown time and again, to do otherwise is to slip toward decline and superstition.

Ours is a possible approach to continue in that quest.

**Si requiritis futurum nostrum, spectate astra!**  
*(If you seek our future, look to the stars!)*

Time to opening of first launch window 12 Noon Eastern Daylight Time 22 October 2014

Time to Window Opening 22 October 2014, 16:00:00 UTC			
DAYS	HRS	MIN	SECS
22	59	17	21
37			

#### Acknowledgments

The work was supported by NASA "Vision Mission" grant NNG04GJ60G. We acknowledge contributions of the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory's Team-X. We also acknowledge the use of the images of Jupiter in the artwork from the Cassini Imaging Team. The views expressed herein are not necessarily endorsed by the sponsor.



Editor: JHU/APL Webmaster  
JHU/APL Official: Kent Beisser  
Last Updated: 12/31/09  
+ Contact JHU/APL

<http://interstellarexplorer.jhuapl.edu/>

Page 1 of 1

# IIE is Online

## Web Statistics

26 Dec 2005 - 13 Aug 2008

8,469 visits

28,504 pages

2,771,004 hits

Screen-capture  
Thursday 14 Aug  
2008

16 August 2008

# <http://interstellarexplorer.jhuapl.edu>

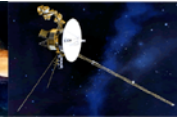
Ares V Solar System Workshop

RLM - 23

PUBLIC DOMAIN INFORMATION. NO LICENSE REQUIRED IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITAR 120.11(8).



Si requiritis  
futurum nostrum,  
spectate astra!



**APL**  
Space Department

# Time for a New Pioneer?

